BILL'S HOME TECH
Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

BILL'S COMPLETE MANUALS

Philips Hue

Bulbs, the Bridge, the app, scenes, schedules and voice control — explained in plain English, one step at a time

A plain-English guide to smart lighting for seniors and families

Take your time — you can't break it

Written for you by Bill — Bill's Home Tech

(330) 200-8042 · BillsHomeTech.com

For Hue bulbs, Hue Bridge & Bridge Pro and the Hue app · facts current November 2026

What's Inside

This is your Philips Hue manual. Read it in any order and at your own pace — there is no test, and nothing here can hurt your lights. Whether a starter kit just arrived as a gift, a family member set up Hue for you and moved away, or you'd simply like the porch light to come on by itself at sunset, every feature comes with what it actually does *for you* and slow, step-by-step directions. The Hue app changes its look from time to time, so if a button on your screen is worded a little differently, the idea is still the same.

Part 1 — Getting to Know Philips Hue

1 A Note from Bill
2 What Philips Hue Is (and Isn't)
3 The Bulbs: White, White Ambiance, White & Color
4 Bluetooth, Bridge or Bridge Pro?

Part 2 — Getting Set Up

5 Before You Start
6 Setting Up the Hue Bridge & the App
7 Your Hue Account
8 Adding Lights (Even Stubborn Ones)
9 Rooms and Zones

Part 3 — Everyday Control

10 Everyday Control in the Hue App
11 Scenes: Your Favorite Looks, One Tap Away
12 Natural Light: Lighting That Follows the Day

Part 4 — Lights That Run Themselves

13 Automations: The Basics
14 Wake Up and Go to Sleep
15 Coming Home, Leaving Home & Mimic Presence

Part 5 — Switches, Buttons & Sensors

16 The Dimmer Switch, Smart Button & Tap Dial
17 Wall Switches: Keep the Power On
18 Motion Sensing & MotionAware

Part 6 — Voice Control

19 Hue with Amazon Alexa
20 Hue with Google Home & Google Assistant
21 Apple Home, Siri & Matter

Part 7 — Safe, Secure & Working

22 Away-from-Home Control & a Safe Hue Account
23 Hue Secure Cameras, Briefly
24 Scams to Watch For
25 When a Light Is "Unreachable"
26 After a Power Outage or a New Router
27 Resetting a Light, a Remote or the Bridge

Part 8 — Help & Reference

28 What Hue Really Costs
29 When to Call Bill
30 Your Philips Hue Cheat-Sheet

PART 1

Getting to Know Philips Hue

What Hue is, which bulbs are which, and whether you need the little box called a Bridge. Start here.

CHAPTER 1

A Note from Bill

Hello, and welcome. Maybe a Philips Hue starter kit came as a gift. Maybe a son or daughter put smart bulbs in your lamps before they moved away, and now you're the one who has to keep them working. Or maybe you've heard that lights can turn themselves on at dusk, wake you gently in the morning, and answer to your voice, and you'd like to know whether that's worth the trouble. Whichever brought you here, this guide is for **you**.

I'm Bill. Helping folks in Portage County feel at home with their technology is what I do every day, and I've been doing it professionally for more than 30 years. I wrote this guide the way I'd explain it sitting next to you at the kitchen table: patiently, in plain English, with no tech talk. If I use a word you don't know, I'll stop and explain it right then.

You truly can't break it by exploring

A smart bulb is still a light bulb. If the app confuses you, the bulb will still light up when you flip the wall switch. Tapping around in the Hue app won't damage anything, and almost every setting can be changed back. The only steps in this guide that erase things are the **reset** steps in Chapter 27, and I'll warn you clearly before each one.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Good lighting is one of the simplest ways to make a home safer and more comfortable. Lights that come on before you walk into a dark house, a hallway that glows softly at night, a bedroom that brightens slowly in the morning, and a whole house you can switch off from your chair — that's what Hue is really for.

What this guide covers

- What **Philips Hue** is, and the difference between **White**, **White ambiance** and **White and color ambiance** bulbs.
- Whether you need a **Hue Bridge** (or the newer **Bridge Pro**), and what it adds.
- Setting up the **Hue app** and your **Hue account**, adding lights, and arranging them into **rooms** and **zones**.
- **Scenes**, **Natural light**, and **automations** such as Wake up, Go to sleep, Coming home and Mimic presence.
- Remotes and switches, and the number-one Hue headache: the ordinary wall switch.

- Voice control with **Alexa**, **Google Home** and **Apple Home** (Siri), plus Matter.
- Keeping your Hue account safe, avoiding scams, fixing a light that won't respond, and honest costs.

And I'm only a phone call away

This guide will carry you a long way on your own. But if you ever get stuck — a light says "unreachable," or the lights stopped working after a new router went in — call me at **(330) 200-8042**. No question is too small.

So find a comfortable chair, pick up your phone, and let's get your lights working for you.

— Bill

CHAPTER 2

What Philips Hue Is (and Isn't)

Philips Hue is a family of smart light bulbs, lamps, light strips, outdoor lights, switches and sensors, all controlled by one free phone app, also called **Philips Hue**. "Smart" simply means each bulb has a tiny radio inside, so it can take instructions from your phone, a remote, a voice speaker or a schedule — not only from the wall switch.

What a Hue light can do that an ordinary bulb can't

- **Dim** smoothly, from a gentle glow to full brightness, without a dimmer wired in the wall.
- **Change its shade of white** — from cozy, candle-like warm white to crisp, daylight-like cool white (on White ambiance and color bulbs).
- **Change color** — any color you like, for holidays or for fun (on White and color ambiance bulbs).
- **Turn on and off on a schedule** — at a set time, at sunset, or when you arrive home.
- **Answer to your voice** through Alexa, Google or Siri.
- **Be controlled from anywhere** — from your phone in a store parking lot, if you have a Hue Bridge.

A few words you'll see

Word	What it means
Hue app	The free Philips Hue app for iPhone, iPad and Android. It's where you set everything up.
Hue Bridge	A small white box that plugs into your internet router with a cable. It talks to your lights and unlocks the bigger features. Chapter 4 explains whether you need one.
Hue account	Your sign-in with Philips Hue (an email address and password). It lets you control your lights away from home and link them to voice assistants. Chapter 7.
Room	A group of lights in one physical room, like Living Room. Each light belongs to one room.
Zone	A flexible group that can cross rooms, like Downstairs. Chapter 9.
Scene	A saved "look" — which lights are on, how bright and what color. Chapter 11.
Automation	Something the lights do by themselves, like turning on at sunset. Chapters 13–15.

GOOD TO KNOW

Who makes Hue

Hue products carry the Philips name, but they're made by a company called **Signify** (formerly Philips Lighting). You may see the name Signify on receipts, emails or the fine print. That's normal and genuine.

What Hue isn't

Hue isn't a light switch replacement, and it isn't a Wi-Fi bulb in the way some cheaper brands are. Most Hue lights talk to each other and to the Bridge over a low-power radio called **Zigbee**, and to your phone over **Bluetooth**. You don't have to understand either one; just know that a Hue light is happiest when it always has power. That's the single biggest lesson in this guide, and Chapter 17 is all about it.

TIP

Already know other smart lights?

If you're comparing Hue with other brands, our Smart Lights guide walks through Hue alongside Kasa and Govee. This guide goes much deeper on Hue alone.

CHAPTER 3

The Bulbs: White, White Ambiance, White & Color

Walk down a store aisle and Hue boxes all look alike. The difference that matters most is printed near the top of every box: what kind of light the bulb can make.

The three kinds of Hue light

Kind	What it does	Good for
Hue White	Soft white light. Dims up and down. One shade of white.	Hallways, closets, porch fixtures — anywhere you just want dependable, dimmable light.
Hue White ambiance	Dims, and changes from warm white to cool, daylight white.	Kitchens, bedrooms, reading lamps. Lets you use bright cool light by day and warm light at night.
Hue White and color ambiance	Everything White ambiance does, plus millions of colors.	Living rooms, TV areas, holiday decorating, or a soft colored night light.

All three work in the same app, with the same remotes and the same automations. You can mix them freely in one room. A White bulb will simply ignore a color it can't make and stay white.

Shapes and sizes

The everyday lamp bulb is called an **A19** with an **E26** base — the standard American screw-in size. Hue also makes bulbs labeled by brightness, such as **60W** or **75W**. That doesn't mean they use 60 or 75 watts of electricity (they use far less); it means they're about as bright as an old 60- or 75-watt bulb. Beyond A19 bulbs, Hue makes candle-shaped bulbs, floodlights for recessed cans, downlights, light strips, table lamps and outdoor lights.

What they cost

Hue product (U.S. list price on philips-hue.com)	Price, as of November 2026
White ambiance A19, 75W equivalent, single bulb	$44.99
White and color ambiance A19, 75W equivalent, single bulb	$59.99
White ambiance A19, 60W equivalent, 2-pack	$48.99
White and color ambiance A19, 75W equivalent, 2-pack	$109.99

These are list prices. Hue runs sales often, especially around Black Friday and the holidays, and stores sell multi-packs and starter kits for less per bulb. Treat these numbers as a starting point.

FROM BILL

My honest buying advice

Don't put color bulbs everywhere. Color is fun in the living room, but a White ambiance bulb does everything most people need — bright and cool for reading, warm and dim for evening — for noticeably less money. Start with one room, live with it for a week, then decide what to add.

HEADS UP

Check the fixture before you buy

Some fixtures need a different base (a smaller candelabra base, or a GU10 for track lighting). Take an old bulb with you to the store, or a photo of it. And a Hue bulb isn't meant for a fixture that already has its own dimmer switch in the wall — leave that dimmer at full, or better, have it replaced with a standard switch.

CHAPTER 4

Bluetooth, Bridge or Bridge Pro?

This is the biggest decision with Hue, and it's simpler than it sounds. Today's Hue bulbs can be controlled two ways: straight from your phone over **Bluetooth**, or through a **Hue Bridge**, a small box connected to your internet router.

Bluetooth only: fine for a lamp or two

Without a Bridge, your phone talks directly to each bulb. It works, and it's a cheap way to try Hue. But Philips Hue's own help pages list the limits plainly:

- A small number of lights — Hue's FAQ says up to **10 lights** per phone or tablet.
- Short range — Bluetooth reaches roughly **30 feet**, so you have to be at home and fairly close.
- **No control away from home**.
- **No automations** such as Coming home or Mimic presence, and fewer options with voice assistants.

The Hue Bridge: the full experience

The Bridge plugs into your router with a network cable and stays on all the time. It's the "brain" that remembers your schedules and runs them even when your phone is off or out of the house.

- Up to **50 lights** and **12 accessories** (remotes, switches, sensors).
- Control your lights from **anywhere** with an internet connection.
- All the **automations**: wake up, go to sleep, timers, coming home, mimic presence.
- Works with **Alexa**, **Google Home** and **Apple Home**, and through **Matter** (Chapter 21).
- Adding a Bridge later doesn't mean replacing bulbs — you simply add your existing bulbs to it.

The Hue Bridge Pro: for bigger homes

Hue's newer hub is the **Bridge Pro**. It does everything the regular Bridge does, with room for many more lights and some extra features.

	Hue Bridge	Hue Bridge Pro
U.S. list price (Nov. 2026)	$79.99	$149.99

	Hue Bridge	Hue Bridge Pro
Lights	Up to 50	150+
Accessories	Up to 12	50+
Away-from-home control and automations	Yes	Yes
MotionAware (lights that sense motion, Chapter 18)	No	Yes
Scenes	Plenty for most homes	Room for up to 500

FROM BILL

Which should you get?

For one or two lamps you'll only control while you're home, Bluetooth is fine. For anything more — especially schedules, voice control, or turning lights on while you're away — get a Bridge. Most homes never come close to 50 lights. The Bridge Pro makes sense for larger homes, or if MotionAware appeals to you. If you already own a regular Bridge, Hue's app has a guided upgrade that moves your setup to a Bridge Pro.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

With a Bridge, your lights keep their schedule whether or not your phone is nearby. The porch light comes on at sunset every night, even when you're away visiting family — and you can check on it from wherever you are.

PART 2

Getting Set Up

The Bridge, the app, your Hue account, adding lights, and arranging them into rooms and zones.

CHAPTER 5

Before You Start

Ten minutes of preparation saves an hour of frustration. Here's what to have ready before you open the box.

Your checklist

1. **A smartphone or tablet** (iPhone, iPad or Android) with the latest updates installed.
2. **Your Wi-Fi name and password**. The phone must be on your home Wi-Fi during setup.
3. **A free spot on your router** for the Bridge's cable, and a power outlet nearby. If your router's ports are all full, see the tip below.
4. **An email address you can check**, for your Hue account.
5. **A pen**, to write down each bulb's six-character serial number before it goes into the lamp (more on why in Chapter 8).
6. **Wall switches turned on** for every fixture you're putting a Hue bulb into.

TIP

Write the serial numbers down now

Every Hue light has a short serial number printed on it — six letters and numbers. If the app ever can't find a light, that number gets it found. It's much easier to copy it from the bulb now than to climb a ladder later. There's a place for them on the Cheat-Sheet in Chapter 30.

Where the Bridge goes

The Bridge connects to your router with the network cable in the box. Hue recommends using one of the router's own main network (LAN) ports rather than a secondary port or a separate network switch. Because the Bridge talks to lights by radio, a central spot in the house helps — but it must be within reach of the router.

GOOD TO KNOW

No free port on the router?

Some internet-company routers have only one or two spare ports. A small network switch can add more, though Hue's advice is to use the router itself where you can. If you're unsure, this is a quick thing to sort out with a hand.

CHAPTER 6

Setting Up the Hue Bridge & the App

This is the one part of Hue that feels technical, and it only happens once. The app leads you through it; your job is just to follow along.

Step by step

1. Screw in your Hue bulbs and turn their wall switches **on**.
2. Plug the Bridge into power, and connect its network cable to your router.
3. Wait a couple of minutes while the lights on the Bridge come on.
4. On your phone, download the free **Philips Hue** app from the App Store or Google Play. Check that the maker is listed as Philips Hue or Signify.
5. Open the app and follow its prompts. It searches your network for the Bridge.
6. When asked, press the large round button on top of the Bridge. This proves you're standing next to it.
7. Create or sign in to your **Hue account** when the app asks (Chapter 7).
8. Let the app search for lights, then name them and put them in rooms (Chapters 8 and 9).
9. If the app offers a software update for the Bridge or lights, let it run.

HEADS UP

Do it on your home Wi-Fi

The phone and the Bridge have to be on the same home network for setup. If your phone is on cellular data, or on a guest Wi-Fi network, the app may not find the Bridge.

The lights on the Bridge

The Bridge has three small lights on top. When all three are lit, it has power, is on your network and is connected to the internet. If one of them is off or blinking, the Bridge is telling you something; Chapter 25 covers what to try. Hue has a support article titled "Why isn't the third light on my Bridge on?" for exactly that question.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Once the Bridge is set up, you won't have to think about it again. It sits quietly next to the router and keeps your lights, schedules and voice control working day and night.

CHAPTER 7

Your Hue Account

A **Hue account** is your personal sign-in with Philips Hue, made of an email address and a password. It isn't a subscription and it doesn't cost anything.

What the account does

- Lets you control your lights and automations **from anywhere**, not just at home.
- Is what you sign in with when you link **Alexa** or **Google Home** to your lights.
- Is needed for **Hue Secure** cameras and plans, if you ever use them.
- Keeps your Hue setup tied to you, so a new phone can pick up where the old one left off.

Make it safe from the start

Because a Hue account can turn your lights on and off from anywhere — and see your cameras, if you have Hue Secure — give it a strong, unique password, and turn on **two-factor authentication**. That means a sign-in from a new device also needs a short code sent to your phone or shown in an authenticator app. Chapter 22 has the steps.

TIP

Write down which email you used

Many people have two or three email addresses. Write down which one your Hue account uses on the Cheat-Sheet in Chapter 30. When it's time to link Alexa or a new phone, you'll be glad you did.

SCAM ALERT

Philips Hue will never call you for your password

Nobody from Philips Hue or Signify will phone, text or email asking for your Hue password or a code sent to your phone. If someone does, it's a scam — hang up. Chapter 24 explains the common tricks.

CHAPTER 8

Adding Lights (Even Stubborn Ones)

Most of the time, the app finds new Hue lights on its own in under a minute. When it doesn't, there are two reliable fixes: add the light by its **serial number**, or reset the light and try again.

Adding a new light the normal way

1. Screw in the new bulb and turn its wall switch **on**.
2. Open the Hue app and tap **Settings**.
3. Tap **Light setup** (on some versions, **Lights**), then **Add light**.
4. If the box or bulb has a QR code, you can scan it. If not, tap **No QR code**.
5. Tap **Search**. Leave the phone alone for a minute while it looks.
6. When the light appears, give it a clear name — "Reading lamp" beats "Hue color lamp 3."
7. Put it in a room (Chapter 9).

When the light won't show up: use the serial number

Every Hue light has a six-character serial number printed on the bulb, or on a tag on the cord of a lamp or light strip. Adding a light by serial number tells the Bridge exactly what to look for.

1. Find the serial number and write it down. It's exactly six characters.
2. In the Hue app, go to **Settings** > **Light setup** > **Add light**.
3. Choose to add it by **serial number** and type the six characters.
4. Tap to search. The light flashes when it's found.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> **No letter O in a serial number**
>
> A Hue serial number uses only the digits 0 to 9 and the letters A to F. There's never a letter O — if you see a round character, it's a zero. That one detail trips up a lot of people.

Still not found? Check these, in order

1. Is the wall switch on? A light that's switched off at the wall can't answer.
2. Is it within range? Light strips and bulbs far from the Bridge may need a light in between to relay the signal. Try a closer lamp first.
3. Was the bulb used in someone else's Hue setup before? Then it needs a reset (Chapter 27) before your Bridge will take it.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Knowing the serial-number trick means a stubborn bulb never costs you an afternoon. It's the single most useful thing to know about adding Hue lights.

CHAPTER 9

Rooms and Zones

Once you have more than a couple of lights, grouping them makes everything easier: one tap, or one sentence to Alexa, controls the whole group.

Rooms

A **room** is the lights in one real room — Kitchen, Bedroom, Front Porch. Each light can belong to **only one room**. Give rooms the names you actually say out loud, because voice assistants use the same names.

Zones

A **zone** is a flexible group that can cross rooms. A light can be in as many zones as you like. Zones are perfect for things like:

- **Upstairs** — every bedroom and the upstairs hall, so you can turn the whole floor off at once.
- **Night path** — the bedroom lamp, the hall light and the bathroom light.
- **TV area** — just the lamps around the couch in a large open living room.

Making changes

1. In the Hue app, find the room or zone on the home screen.
2. Tap its **three dots** (…) and choose **Edit**.
3. Tap the **plus** (+) to add a light, or move a light in from another room.
4. To make a new room or zone, look in **Settings** for **Rooms & Zones** and follow the prompts.

TIP

Pick the right room icon

When you create a room, the app asks what kind of room it is and lets you choose an icon. Choose the closest match. Hue's Mimic presence feature (Chapter 15) uses room types to make your house look naturally lived-in while you're away.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

"Alexa, turn off upstairs" from the bottom of the stairs, or one tap to light the path to the bathroom at night. Good rooms and zones turn a handful of bulbs into a house that's easy to run.

PART 3

Everyday Control

Turning lights on, off and dimming them; saving your favorite looks as scenes; and light that follows the sun.

CHAPTER 10

Everyday Control in the Hue App

Most days you'll do just three things: turn lights on, turn them off, and make them brighter or dimmer. The Hue app puts all three on its home screen.

The home screen at a glance

- Each **room** and **zone** appears as its own card or row.
- The **switch** on each card turns the whole room on or off.
- The **slider** on the card sets brightness — slide right for brighter, left for dimmer.
- Tapping the room's name opens it, showing each light and the room's **scenes**.

Controlling a single light

1. Open the Hue app and tap the room.
2. Find the light you want. Use its own switch and slider to turn it on, off, brighter or dimmer.
3. To change its shade of white or its color, tap the light (or the color circle next to it) and drag your finger around the color wheel or the white-tone picker.
4. Tap the back arrow to return to the home screen.

> **TIP**
> **Make the screen easier to read**
>
> If the app's text is small, make your phone's text larger in its own settings (on an iPhone: **Settings** > **Display & Brightness** > **Text Size**; on Android, look under **Settings** > **Display**). Most apps, including Hue, follow that setting.

The wall switch still works — sort of

Flipping the wall switch off cuts the power to the bulb, so it goes dark like any bulb. Flipping it back on brings the light back. The catch: while the switch is off, the app, voice assistants and schedules can't reach that light at all. That's why Chapter 17 is worth reading before you get into the habit of using the wall switch.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Turning off every light in the house without walking room to room — from the couch, or from bed — is one of the simplest, most-loved things Hue does. It's also a real help on nights when your knees or your energy are not at their best.

CHAPTER 11

Scenes: Your Favorite Looks, One Tap Away

A **scene** is a saved setting for a room or zone: which lights are on, how bright each one is, and what shade or color. Instead of adjusting four lamps every evening, you tap one scene.

Scenes you'll actually use

Scene type	When to use it
Bright	Full, clear light for cleaning, cooking or finding something you dropped.
Read or Concentrate	Bright, slightly cool white that's easy on the eyes for reading and puzzles.
Relax	Warm, softer light for the evening.
Nightlight	A very dim, warm glow — enough to find your way without waking up fully.
Colorful scenes	Hue's scene gallery has many color scenes for parties and holidays (color bulbs only).

The exact scene names in the app's gallery change from time to time, but you'll always find plain white scenes for everyday use and a gallery of colorful ones.

Using a scene

1. Open the Hue app and tap a room or zone.
2. Scroll to its **scenes**.
3. Tap a scene. The lights change within a second or two.

Making your own scene

1. Set the lights in a room exactly how you like them, one by one.
2. In that room, look for the option to add or create a new scene (often a **plus** sign near the scenes).
3. Give the scene a name you'll remember and might say out loud, like "Evening" or "Puzzle time."
4. Save it. Your scene now appears with the others — and in Alexa or Google, too, once they're linked.

TIP

Name scenes for your voice

If you'll use Alexa or Google, short, distinct names work best. "Movie" is easier for a speaker to hear correctly than "Saturday night film mode."

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A scene is a way to make the house feel right in one tap: bright for the grandchildren's visit, warm and calm for a quiet evening, gentle at bedtime. Remotes and automations can trigger scenes too, so you set it up once and use it for years.

CHAPTER 12

Natural Light: Lighting That Follows the Day

Natural light is a special built-in scene in the Hue app. Instead of staying one color all day, it slowly changes on its own — cooler, energizing white around the middle of the day, and warm, relaxing amber in the evening — much like sunlight does.

What you need

- **White ambiance** or **White and color ambiance** lights. Plain Hue White bulbs can't change their shade of white, so the effect won't show.
- A Hue Bridge, so the changes happen on schedule.

Turning it on

1. In the Hue app, tap a room — the kitchen or living room is a good place to start.
2. Find **Natural light** among the room's scenes and tap it.
3. That's it. The lights now drift gently through the day on their own.

Fine-tuning it

You can edit the Natural light scene to change how quickly it moves between its times of day. Hue also lets it **auto-adjust to your local sunset**, so the warm evening light arrives earlier in winter and later in summer: edit the scene and set **Auto-adjust** to **Sunset**.

Natural light can also be chosen in Custom automations, Coming home automations and timers, and on Hue switches and sensors that have time-of-day settings.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Hue describes Natural light as helping you feel more alert in the daytime and more relaxed as evening comes. In plain terms: you never have to remember to switch the kitchen from "bright" to "cozy" — the lights do it for you, at the right time of year.

PART 4

Lights That Run Themselves

Automations: lights that come on at sunset, brighten you awake, dim you to sleep, and greet you when you come home. A Hue Bridge is needed for these.

CHAPTER 13

Automations: The Basics

An **automation** is something your lights do by themselves: turn on at a set time, at sunset, when you come home, and so on. In the Hue app, automations live on their own tab, called **Automations**. (Older versions of the app called them "Routines.")

The kinds of automations

Automation	What it does
Wake up	Brightens bedroom lights gradually at a time you choose (Chapter 14).
Go to sleep	Dims lights slowly until they're off (Chapter 14).
Timers	Do something after a countdown — for example, turn off the lights in 30 minutes.
Coming home / Leaving home	Uses your phone's location to turn lights on as you arrive, or off as you leave (Chapter 15).
Mimic presence	Turns lights on and off in a natural-looking way while you're away (Chapter 15).
Custom	Your own recipe: start at a time or at sunset, then turn lights on, off, or to a scene.

Creating an automation

1. Open the Hue app and tap the **Automations** tab.
2. If this is your first one, tap the button on the screen to create your first automation. Otherwise, tap the **plus** (+) at the top.
3. Choose the kind of automation.
4. Follow the prompts: when it should start, which rooms or lights, and what they should do.
5. Save it. You'll see it listed on the Automations tab, with a switch to turn it on or off.

A porch light that comes on at sunset

This is the automation almost everyone wants first. Choose a **Custom** automation, set it to start at **sunset**, choose the porch or front room, and choose a scene or simply "on." You can add an end time, too. Hue works out sunset from your home's location — set under **Settings** > **Location settings** — so it shifts with the seasons on its own.

Timers

Timers live on the Automations tab, too. A timer doesn't start by itself: tap its **play** button to start the countdown, and the **stop** button to cancel it. A timer is handy for "turn the living room off in an hour" when you might doze off in the chair.

HEADS UP

Automations need power at the bulb

If a wall switch is off, the automation will run, but that light can't respond. When an automation seems to "not work," check the wall switch first.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Automations are where Hue earns its keep. A porch light you never have to remember, a house that isn't dark when you get home from an evening out, lights that turn themselves off if you forget — small things that add up to a safer, easier home.

CHAPTER 14

Wake Up and Go to Sleep

Two of Hue's gentlest automations are about the start and end of the day. They're especially welcome in the dark months of a Northeast Ohio winter.

Wake up

A **Wake up** automation slowly brightens your bedroom lights at a time you choose, so the room is already light when your alarm goes off — or instead of an alarm. You can choose a **Sunrise** style, which mimics the colors of a real sunrise on color bulbs.

1. Open the **Automations** tab and tap the **plus** (+).
2. Choose **Wake up**.
3. Set the time you want to be fully awake, and the days of the week.
4. Pick the bedroom (and any other rooms) and the wake-up style, such as **Sunrise**.
5. Choose whether the lights should turn off by themselves a while later.
6. Save it.

Go to sleep

A **Go to sleep** automation dims the lights slowly until they're off. Set it for your usual bedtime and you'll never fall asleep with the lamp on again.

1. On the **Automations** tab, tap the **plus** (+) and choose **Go to sleep**.
2. Pick the time and days.
3. Pick the rooms — the bedroom, and perhaps the living room you just left.
4. Save it.

> **TIP**
>
> **Leave a little light for the night**
>
> If you get up during the night, consider a soft path instead of total darkness: a dim Nightlight-style scene in the hallway, or a motion sensor that turns on a low light only when you walk by (Chapter 18).

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Waking to light instead of a buzzer in a pitch-black room is easier on the body, and winding down with dimming lights is a cue to sleep. Both happen automatically, every day, once they're set.

CHAPTER 15

Coming Home, Leaving Home & Mimic Presence

These three automations are about the times you're *not* home — or are just arriving.

Coming home

A **Coming home** automation uses your phone's location to turn lights on as you get close to the house. Pull into the driveway after dark, and the porch and front room are already lit.

Leaving home

A **Leaving home** automation turns lights off once your phone has left. No more driving back to check whether you left the kitchen light on.

Setting them up

1. On the **Automations** tab, tap the **plus** (+).
2. Choose **Coming home** or **Leaving home**.
3. Follow the prompts, including letting the Hue app use your phone's location.
4. Choose which lights to turn on (or off), and save.

- You can have **one** Coming home and **one** Leaving home automation per Bridge.
- Your phone needs the latest Hue app, location access, and a data connection. Battery-saver mode or airplane mode can stop it from working.
- If more than one person in the house uses it, the app checks whether anyone else is still home before running it.

Mimic presence: a lived-in look while you're away

Mimic presence turns lights on and off in the rooms you choose, in a pattern that looks like someone's home, then turns them off after a while. It's on the Automations tab.

- You choose **rooms** (not zones), and only one Mimic presence automation is allowed per Bridge.
- You can run it **All day** or **Only when it's dark**, based on sunset and sunrise where you live.

- Hue adds a random variation of about 15 minutes each time, so it isn't the same every night.

HEADS UP

Location features need permission

Coming home and Leaving home rely on your phone sharing its location with the Hue app all the time. If you'd rather not allow that, use a sunset automation for the porch instead — it works without knowing where you are.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Never walking into a dark house, never wondering if you left a light on, and a home that looks occupied while you're visiting family. There's a fuller walk-through of the away-from-home setup in "Ways Philips Hue Can Make Life Easier."

PART 5

Switches, Buttons & Sensors

Hue remotes for people who'd rather not use a phone, the wall-switch problem and how to solve it, and lights that respond to motion.

CHAPTER 16

The Dimmer Switch, Smart Button & Tap Dial

Not everyone wants to pull out a phone to turn on a lamp, and visitors certainly won't know how. Hue's wireless remotes give you real buttons to press. They run on a small battery, need no wiring, and can stick to the wall or sit on a table.

The three most popular

Remote	What it is	U.S. list price (Nov. 2026)
Hue Dimmer Switch	Buttons for on, off, brighter and dimmer. Mounts on the wall or lifts off its plate to use as a handheld remote. Uses a CR2032 coin battery. Controls up to 50 lights with a Bridge.	$30.99
Hue Smart Button	A single round button you set up to do what you want — for example, tap for on and off.	$32.99
Hue Tap Dial Switch	Four buttons, each able to control a different room or scene, plus a turning dial for brightness. Needs a Hue Bridge.	$54.99

Prices are list prices on Hue's U.S. store and are often lower on sale. Hue also sells other switches, including a smaller Tap Switch Mini and a wall switch module (see Chapter 17).

Setting one up

1. Pull out the little plastic tab that protects the battery, if there is one.
2. Open the Hue app and go to **Settings**. Look for the option to add an accessory (it may be called **Accessories** or **Accessory setup**).
3. Choose the kind of remote you have and follow the prompts.
4. Choose which room or zone it controls and what each button does.
5. Put it where you'll use it — by the bedroom door, on the nightstand, by the recliner.

> **TIP**
>
> **Put a remote where the old switch was**
>
> The Dimmer Switch is thin enough to mount right next to a wall switch, or over a blank wall plate. That way, anyone who walks into the room finds a familiar switch — and the smart bulb stays powered.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

A remote means you, your guests and a visiting grandchild can all work the lights without a phone, without an app and without explanations. It's also the easiest fix for the wall-switch problem in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 17

Wall Switches: Keep the Power On

Here is the most common Hue problem of all: someone flips the wall switch off. The bulb loses power, and from then on the app, the schedules, Alexa and Google can't reach it. Hue's own help pages give this as a reason a light shows as unreachable: it may have been switched off at a wall switch.

Why it happens

A smart bulb's radio needs electricity to listen for instructions. An ordinary wall switch doesn't "dim" or "signal" a smart bulb — it simply cuts the power. So the switch and the smart bulb end up fighting each other.

Your options, simplest first

1. **Leave the switch on and tell the household.** A small piece of tape or a note works, especially for a guest room or a lamp that's always on a switched outlet.
2. **Add a Hue remote next to the switch** (Chapter 16), so people have something to press that doesn't cut the power.
3. **Use a plastic switch guard** — a simple cover sold at hardware stores that holds a toggle switch in the on position.
4. **Have the switch made smart.** Hue sells a **wall switch module** that fits inside the electrical box behind your existing switch, so the switch you already have controls the Hue lights without cutting their power.

STAY SAFE

Wall box work means turning off the breaker

Installing an in-wall module means opening the switch box, and Hue's own instructions begin with turning off the power at the breaker. If you aren't comfortable with household wiring, don't do it yourself — ask a licensed electrician or a professional installer.

If someone already turned it off

Just flip the wall switch back on and wait a few seconds. The light comes back on, rejoins the system by itself, and shows as reachable in the app again. Nothing was lost.

FROM BILL

This one is worth getting right

A wall switch is the first thing I check whenever Hue lights stop answering. If your household keeps reaching for the switch out of habit, a remote or switch module next to it solves the problem for good. I'm glad to help you decide which fits your home.

CHAPTER 18

Motion Sensing & MotionAware

Lights that come on by themselves when you walk into a room are one of the most practical uses of smart lighting — in a hallway at night, a laundry room when your hands are full, or a garage.

The Hue Motion Sensor

The **Hue Motion Sensor** is a small battery-powered sensor that sits on a shelf or mounts on the wall. When it notices movement, it turns on the lights you've chosen; when the room is quiet, it turns them off again. You set it up in the Hue app the same way as a remote (Chapter 16), and you can choose different light levels for day and night — for example, full light by day and a dim glow after bedtime.

TIP

A gentle night path

A motion sensor in the hallway set to a low, warm light at night means you're never walking to the bathroom in the dark, and nobody is blinded at 3 a.m. by a bright overhead light.

MotionAware: lights that sense motion themselves (Bridge Pro)

With a **Hue Bridge Pro**, Hue offers **MotionAware**: your existing Hue lights work together to notice movement in a room, with no separate sensor. It's available only with the Bridge Pro.

- You need at least **three** compatible lights in the same room, on the same Bridge.
- The app guides you through creating up to **four motion areas** in your home, with three or four lights each.
- It's for **indoors**. Walls between the lights, or lights lined up in a straight row, make it less reliable; lights at different heights help.
- You can adjust each area's sensitivity, and use its **Daylight sensitivity** setting so lights only come on between sunset and sunrise.

GOOD TO KNOW

Security alerts cost extra

MotionAware can also send motion alerts as part of Hue's security system, but those alerts need a paid Hue Secure plan (Chapter 23). Turning lights on when you walk in does not.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Motion lighting is a real fall-prevention help: light appears exactly when and where you need it, without fumbling for a switch in the dark.

PART 6

Voice Control

Turning lights on and off by asking Alexa, Google or Siri — and what Matter means.

CHAPTER 19

Hue with Amazon Alexa

If you have an Amazon Echo, you can control Hue lights by voice: "Alexa, turn on the kitchen," "Alexa, dim the bedroom to 20 percent," "Alexa, turn off all the lights."

Linking Hue to Alexa (with a Hue Bridge)

1. Open the **Amazon Alexa** app on your phone.
2. Find **Skills & Games** and search for **Philips Hue**.
3. Open the Hue skill and enable it.
4. Sign in with your **Hue account** when asked, and choose your Bridge.
5. Tap **Discover Devices** if Alexa offers it, or say "Alexa, discover devices." This can take a little while.
6. Your lights, rooms and scenes now appear in the Alexa app.

Without a Bridge

Bluetooth Hue bulbs can work with some Echo speakers directly. Turn the light on near your Echo and see whether Alexa announces it; if not, say "Alexa, discover devices." A Bridge is recommended if you'll have more than a few lights.

When Alexa says a light isn't responding

1. Check that the light's wall switch is on (Chapter 17).
2. Check that the light works in the Hue app. If it doesn't, fix that first (Chapter 25).
3. Say "Alexa, discover devices."
4. If you've replaced your Bridge, Hue's advice is to say "Alexa, discover devices" first. If that doesn't work, unlink the Hue skill in the Alexa app, remove the Alexa entry under **Settings** > **Smart home** in the Hue app, and link them again.

TIP

More about Echo

Our Amazon Alexa & Echo guide covers the Echo itself — setup, the Alexa app, routines and privacy settings.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Voice control means you don't have to cross a dark room, find your phone or reach a switch. "Alexa, turn on the hallway" from bed is safer than shuffling in the dark.

CHAPTER 20

Hue with Google Home & Google Assistant

With a Google Nest speaker or display, or the Google Home app, you can say "Hey Google, turn off the living room" or control Hue lights alongside your other smart devices.

Linking Hue to Google Home

Before you start, set up your Bridge and lights and have your Hue account sign-in handy.

1. Open the **Google Home** app.
2. Tap the **plus** (+) in the top-left corner, then **Set up device**.
3. Choose **Works with Google**.
4. Search for **Philips Hue** and tap it.
5. You'll be taken to your Hue account page. Sign in, then tap **Yes** to let Google Home control your lights.
6. Back in the Google Home app, your Hue lights and rooms appear in the list.

GOOD TO KNOW

Bluetooth and Matter bulbs

Hue bulbs can also join Google Home over Bluetooth or directly through Matter, but Hue says the Bridge unlocks the most features. Chapter 21 explains Matter.

TIP

More about Google speakers

Our Google Nest & Home guide covers Nest speakers and displays, the Google Home app and its routines.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

If your home already runs on Google, Hue fits right in: one app and one voice for the lights, the thermostat and the doorbell.

CHAPTER 21

Apple Home, Siri & Matter

iPhone users can control Hue with Siri and the Apple **Home** app. And all three big voice systems now speak a shared smart-home language called **Matter**.

What Matter is, in one paragraph

Matter is an industry standard that lets smart-home devices from different companies work with Apple Home, Google Home and Alexa in the same way. For Hue, it means two things: lights on a Hue Bridge can be shared with those apps through Matter, and some newer Hue bulbs can join them *without* a Bridge.

With a Hue Bridge (recommended)

With a Bridge, you link Hue to Apple Home from inside the Hue app — look in **Settings** for the smart home section. Linking through the Bridge supports all Hue products, including older bulbs that don't have Matter built in. Once linked, you can say "Hey Siri, turn on the bedroom."

Without a Bridge: Matter bulbs

- You need Matter-enabled Hue bulbs and a **Thread border router** — a device such as a HomePod mini, a Nest Hub (2nd gen) or certain Echo models that acts as a home base.
- In Apple Home, Google Home or Alexa, add a new device and scan the Matter QR code — or type the **11-digit pairing code** printed on the bulb if the QR code is lost.
- A bulb that was on a Hue Bridge must be removed from the Bridge before it can be paired directly.
- To share a bulb with a second app, first make a new setup code in the app it's already in.
- The Hue Tap Dial Switch and the Play HDMI sync box don't support Matter.

FROM BILL

My advice on Matter

If you already have a Hue Bridge, you don't need to think about Matter at all — link Hue to your voice assistant through the Bridge and you're done. Matter is mainly useful for someone who wants a few bulbs without a Bridge. Our Smart Lights guide compares the choices.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Whatever phone or speaker you or your family use, Hue can work with it. You aren't locked into one company's system.

PART 7

Safe, Secure & Working

Controlling lights away from home, protecting your Hue account, Hue's cameras in brief, scams to watch for, and what to do when a light won't respond.

CHAPTER 22

Away-from-Home Control & a Safe Hue Account

With a Hue Bridge and a Hue account, the Hue app works anywhere your phone has internet: in a store, at the doctor's office, or on vacation. You can turn lights on or off, check what's on, and change or create automations.

Using it

1. Make sure you're signed in to your Hue account in the app (Chapter 7).
2. When you're away, simply open the Hue app. It connects through the internet instead of your home network.
3. Use it just as you would at home.

> HEADS UP
> **If the app can't reach home**
> Away-from-home control depends on your Bridge being online. If the power or the internet is out at the house, the app can't reach your lights until it comes back.

Turn on two-factor authentication

Two-factor authentication means that signing in to your Hue account from a new device needs two things: your password and a short code from your phone. Hue calls it optional but recommends it. You'll need a phone number that can get texts, or an authenticator app.

1. Sign in to your Hue account (on Hue's website, or from the account section of the Hue app).
2. Go to **Settings & preferences**.
3. In the **Login & security** section, find **Two-factor authentication** and select **Enable**.
4. Follow the on-screen steps to receive and enter your first code.

Good habits for your Hue account

- Use a password you don't use anywhere else. Hue watches for passwords that have shown up in other companies' data breaches and will tell you if yours has, so you can lock your account.

- Never share your password or a sign-in code with anyone who contacts you.
- If a family member helps manage your lights, they can use the app in your home; there's no need to hand over your password over the phone.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Peace of mind both ways: you can check on the house from anywhere, and you know that nobody else can.

CHAPTER 23

Hue Secure Cameras, Briefly

Philips Hue also makes security cameras and a video doorbell under the name **Hue Secure**. They live in the same Hue app as your lights, so a camera can, for example, turn lights on when it sees motion. This guide is about lighting, so here's the short version.

What's in the line

- **Hue Secure Wired Camera** and **Battery Camera**.
- **Hue Secure Flood Light Camera** for over a garage or driveway.
- **Hue Secure Wired Doorbell** with a smart chime.

What's free and what costs money

Plan	What you get	U.S. price (Nov. 2026)
Free (included)	Live view and 24 hours of video history for each camera	No charge
Secure Basic	30 days of video history, activity zones and video clips	$39.99 per camera, per year
Secure Plus	60 days of video history, up to 10 cameras	$99.99 per year

Each new Hue Secure camera or doorbell comes with a free 30-day trial of the Basic plan. You manage plans in the Hue app under **Settings** > **Security** > **Plans**. Like most subscriptions, plans renew unless you cancel.

TIP

Comparing cameras?

Our Ring Doorbells & Cameras guide and our Google Nest Cameras guide cover the other popular choices. If you already have Hue lights and a Bridge, keeping everything in one app is a real plus.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

If you want cameras anyway, Hue Secure lets your lights and cameras work together — lights that come on outside when someone walks up the driveway — with no extra apps to learn.

CHAPTER 24

Scams to Watch For

Smart-home gadgets attract the same scammers as everything else. Knowing the three common tricks takes away most of their power.

SCAM ALERT

Fake "Philips Hue support" phone numbers

If you search the web for "Hue support phone number," ads and look-alike websites may show numbers that aren't Philips Hue at all. The person who answers may ask to "connect to your computer" or charge you for a "repair." Get help only from the Hue app or by typing **philips-hue.com** yourself and following its Support link. Never let a stranger who called you, or whom you found through an ad, take control of your phone or computer.

SCAM ALERT

Emails and texts phishing for your Hue account

A message says your Hue account is "locked," "expiring" or "suspended" and gives a link to sign in. Don't tap it. Open the Hue app yourself instead. If something is really wrong, the app will tell you. Never give a sign-in code to anyone — a real company never needs it.

SCAM ALERT

Gift cards and "pay to fix your lights"

No real company asks to be paid in gift cards, cryptocurrency or a wire transfer. Anyone asking for payment that way is a scammer, full stop.

Buying Hue safely

- Buy from a store you know or from Hue's own website. Prices far below everyone else's on unfamiliar websites are a warning sign.
- Download only the official **Philips Hue** app from the App Store or Google Play.
- Be wary of apps that promise "free Hue features" and ask for your Hue account password.

If you think you've been tricked

1. Change your Hue account password right away, and turn on two-factor authentication (Chapter 22).
2. If you paid with a card, call the number on the back of the card.
3. If someone took control of your computer or phone, turn it off and get help before using it for banking.
4. Call someone you trust — a family member, or me.

FROM BILL

There's no shame in being targeted

Scammers are professionals and they fool smart people every day. If something feels wrong, stop and call (330) 200-8042 before you do anything else.

CHAPTER 25

When a Light Is "Unreachable"

"Unreachable" or "not responding" in the Hue app means the Bridge can't talk to that light right now. It's almost always something simple. Work down this list in order.

Check these first

1. **The wall switch.** Is it on? A light switched off at the wall can't answer. Flip it on and wait ten seconds.
2. **The bulb.** Is it screwed in snugly? Does the lamp's own switch or pull chain need turning on?
3. **The distance.** Is the light far from the Bridge or from other Hue lights? Hue lights pass signals to one another, so a light at the far end of the house may need another Hue light in between.

If every light is unreachable

When the whole house stops answering, the problem is usually the Bridge or the network:

1. Look at the Bridge. Are its lights on? Is the network cable still plugged in at both ends?
2. Restart the Bridge and the router: unplug each from power for **30 seconds**, then plug the router back in first, wait for it to come fully back, then the Bridge.
3. Make sure the Bridge is plugged into one of the router's main ports, not a separate switch.
4. If you use a VPN or network filter on your router, it may be blocking the Bridge; try turning it off.

If the problem keeps coming back

Other wireless gadgets can crowd the radio channel Hue uses. Hue's suggestion is to change the Bridge's **Zigbee channel**: in the Hue app, go to **Settings** > **Hue Bridges**, choose your Bridge, then **Zigbee** > **Change channel**. The app does the rest.

> TIP
> **Don't reset first**
> Resetting a light or the Bridge is the last step, not the first. A reset erases settings you'd have to rebuild. Try everything on this page before turning to Chapter 27.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Most of the time, a few minutes with this checklist gets things working again — no phone call, no reset, nothing lost.

CHAPTER 26

After a Power Outage or a New Router

Two events trip up Hue more than any others: the power going out, and the internet company swapping your router. Both are easy to recover from.

After a power outage

1. Give everything a few minutes after the power comes back. The router has to start up first, then the Bridge.
2. You may find some lights came on by themselves when power returned. That's normal — turn them off in the app or with a remote.
3. Open the Hue app. If lights show as unreachable, work through Chapter 25.
4. Check your automations still look right on the **Automations** tab. They're stored on the Bridge, so they normally survive an outage.

> TIP
> **Brief flickers and surges**
> Thunderstorms can cause the power to blink several times. If the Bridge or router seems confused afterward, the 30-second unplug-and-restart in Chapter 25 usually sorts it out.

After a new router or internet company

The Bridge connects to the router by cable, so it doesn't need your Wi-Fi password. Usually all it needs is to be plugged into the new router.

1. Plug the Bridge's network cable into one of the **new** router's main ports.
2. Make sure your phone is on the **new** Wi-Fi network.
3. Open the Hue app and give it a minute to find the Bridge.
4. If it doesn't, restart the router and the Bridge (unplug each for 30 seconds), and try again.
5. Check that Alexa or Google still control your lights. If not, see Chapters 19 and 20.

> HEADS UP
> **Ask the installer to leave a port free**
> When the internet company installs a new router, ask them before they leave to plug your Hue Bridge in, or at least to leave you a free port. It's a thirty-second job while they're there.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Knowing that the Bridge just needs its cable moved takes the dread out of a router swap. Your lights, rooms, scenes and schedules all live on the Bridge and come along unchanged.

CHAPTER 27

Resetting a Light, a Remote or the Bridge

A **reset** wipes a device back to how it came out of the box. It's the right step when a light won't join your system, came from someone else's home, or nothing in Chapters 25 and 26 helped. Read each warning before you start.

Resetting a light that's in your app and working

If you want to remove a light — to give it away, or to add it again cleanly — delete it in the app:

1. In the Hue app, go to **Settings** > **Lights**.
2. Tap the light.
3. Tap **Delete**. The light is reset and removed.

Resetting a light the app can't see

For a used bulb, or one that won't show up, Hue lets you reset it with its serial number:

1. Make sure the light is powered on and close to the Bridge.
2. In the Hue app, go to **Settings** > **Lights** and tap the **plus** (+).
3. Choose **Use serial number**, type the six characters, and search.
4. The light flashes when it's been reset. Then add it as in Chapter 8.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
> **Other reset methods**
>
> Hue's support article "How to factory reset Philips Hue lights" also covers resetting with a Hue Dimmer Switch or Tap Dial, and resetting Bluetooth-only lights. If the method above doesn't fit your situation, look there.

Resetting a Hue Dimmer Switch

1. Find the small recessed **Setup/Reset** button on the back.
2. Press and hold it with a paperclip for about **10 seconds**.
3. The small light on the front blinks orange when the reset is done.

Resetting the Hue Bridge — the last resort

HEADS UP

A Bridge reset erases everything

Resetting the Bridge deletes all your rooms, lights, scenes and automations. You'll have to set up your whole system again, and lights may need their serial numbers to be found. First, try simply restarting the Bridge (unplug it for 30 seconds).

1. In the Hue app, remove the Bridge first: go to **Settings** > **Hue Bridges** and follow the option to remove it.
2. Turn the Bridge over and find the small recessed button labeled **Restore factory settings**.
3. Press and hold it with a paperclip for **5 to 10 seconds**.
4. When its lights settle, set it up again as in Chapter 6.

FROM BILL

Before you reset the Bridge, call

A Bridge reset takes a working system apart. If you've reached this point, it's worth a quick call first — there may be a simpler fix, and if a full rebuild is needed, I can do it with you so all your rooms and schedules come back the way you like them.

PART 8

Help & Reference

What Hue honestly costs, when a hand is worth it, and a one-page cheat-sheet.

CHAPTER 28

What Hue Really Costs

Hue is a premium brand: it costs more than bargain smart bulbs, and you're paying for reliability, a polished app, and a system that grows with you. Here are honest numbers from Hue's U.S. store, as of November 2026.

Item	List price	Notes
Hue app	Free	For iPhone, iPad and Android
Hue account	Free	Needed for away-from-home and voice control
Hue Bridge	$79.99	Up to 50 lights, 12 accessories
Hue Bridge Pro	$149.99	150+ lights, 50+ accessories, MotionAware
White ambiance A19 bulb (75W equivalent)	$44.99	Single bulb
White and color ambiance A19 bulb (75W equivalent)	$59.99	Single bulb
Hue Dimmer Switch	$30.99	Battery powered remote
Hue Smart Button	$32.99	Single programmable button
Hue Tap Dial Switch	$54.99	Needs a Bridge
Hue Secure Basic plan	$39.99 per camera, per year	Only if you have Hue cameras
Hue Secure Plus plan	$99.99 per year	Up to 10 cameras

Ways to spend wisely

- Start with a Bridge and three or four bulbs in the room you use most. Add more once you know you like it.
- Use White ambiance bulbs for most rooms; save color bulbs for one or two spots.
- Watch for sales. Hue's prices drop regularly, especially in November and December.
- There's no monthly fee for lighting. The only subscriptions are the optional Hue Secure camera plans.

TIP

Electricity costs less, too

Hue bulbs are LED bulbs. A "75W equivalent" bulb gives roughly the light of an old 75-watt bulb while using a small fraction of the electricity, and dimming uses less still.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Knowing the real prices up front means no surprises — and no need to be talked into a big kit when a Bridge and a few bulbs will do.

CHAPTER 29

When to Call Bill

This guide is meant to make you independent. But some jobs go faster with a hand, and some are simply more pleasant with company. Here's an honest list of when a call is worth it.

Good reasons to call

- Planning a Hue setup: which rooms, which bulbs, and whether you need a Bridge or Bridge Pro.
- Setting up the Bridge when the router is in an awkward place or has no free port.
- Lights that won't add, keep going unreachable, or stopped working after a new router.
- Linking Hue to Alexa, Google Home or Apple Home — or untangling it when it stops working.
- Setting up schedules: porch light at sunset, wake-up light, a safe night path.
- Solving the wall-switch problem for good, including arranging an electrician for in-wall modules.
- Taking over a system a family member set up, so it's in *your* Hue account and you know how it works.
- Anything that feels like a scam, or after you've given information to someone you now doubt.

What working with me is like

I serve Portage County, Ohio, and I bring more than 30 years of professional experience. I work at your pace, explain as I go, and leave you with notes in plain English. Smart lighting is part of my smart home installation work, so I can set up the whole thing — Bridge, bulbs, rooms, schedules and voice control — and show you how to run it.

FROM BILL

Get a hand from Bill

$49 remote · $99 in your home. Call **(330) 200-8042** or book online at **billshometech.com/book**. Remote help works well for app, account and voice-assistant problems; an in-home visit is best for a new setup or a whole-house plan.

GOOD TO KNOW

Who answers the phone

When you call or visit the website, you may be greeted by **Sophie**, my AI receptionist. She can answer basic questions and book a time that suits you.

CHAPTER 30

Your Philips Hue Cheat-Sheet

The essentials on one page. Keep it near the Bridge or with your important papers.

The essentials

Task	How
Turn lights on/off	Hue app home screen: the switch on each room. Or a Hue remote, or your voice.
Add a light	**Settings** > **Light setup** > **Add light** > **Search**. Won't show? Add it by its 6-character serial number.
Make a schedule	**Automations** tab > **plus** (+) > choose Wake up, Go to sleep, Custom, Coming home…
Light "unreachable"	Wall switch on? Bulb snug? Then restart router and Bridge (30 seconds unplugged).
Interference keeps returning	**Settings** > **Hue Bridges** > **Zigbee** > **Change channel**.
Two-factor authentication	Hue account > **Settings & preferences** > **Login & security**.
Location for sunset times	**Settings** > **Location settings**.
Golden rule	Keep wall switches for Hue lights **on**.

Write it down once

What	Yours
Hue account email	_____
Where the Bridge is	_____
Bridge or Bridge Pro?	_____
Light serial numbers	_____
	_____
	_____
Voice assistant linked	Alexa / Google / Apple Home: _____

HEADS UP

Never write down your password here

Keep your Hue password in a password manager or a private notebook, not on a sheet that sits by the router.

When something's wrong, in order

1. Check the wall switch and the bulb.
2. Close and reopen the Hue app.
3. Unplug the router and the Bridge for 30 seconds; router back first, then the Bridge.
4. Add a stubborn light by serial number.
5. Only then consider a reset (Chapter 27).
6. Stuck, or something feels like a scam? Call Bill at (330) 200-8042 — $49 remote · $99 in your home.